

Minutes: ECICC Gaps and Barriers Committee (GBC)

August 22, 2008, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Cornhusker Hotel

Lincoln, Nebraska

The Gaps and Barriers Standing Committee of the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC) met on August 22, 2008 in a regular meeting prior to the ECICC meeting at the Cornhusker Hotel, Lincoln, Nebraska. Carey Winkler and Mary Phillips co-chaired the meeting.

Present: Rae Anderson, Lynn Brehm, Amy Bunnell, Carol Fichter, Laura Good Buffalo, Louise Hall-Mountain, Barb Jackson, Pam Kasl, Eleanor Kirkland, Joan Luebbers, Ruth Miller, Tammy Mittelstaedt, Mary Phillips, Shirley Pickens-White, Carol Puffer, Mary Alice Queen, Roger Reikofski, Barbara Schliesser, Connie Shockley, Mark Smith, Janet Staehr, Joyce Thomas; Martha Gadberry, facilitator; Susan Dahm, recorder.

Opening and Announcements

- i. Carey Winkler opened the meeting with self introductions by those present.
- ii. Minutes from the May 2, 2008 GBC meeting were provided to members in the meeting packet.
 - Motion, Barb Schliesser; second, Barb Jackson: To approve the minutes as written. The motion passed by voice vote; there were no abstentions.
- iii. Facilitator Martha Gadberry reviewed the agenda and ground rules. There were no additions to the agenda.

Agenda

1. Head Start News

Eleanor Kirkland briefly reviewed changes that would happen under the new Head Start reauthorization. She noted that performance standards and guidance would probably be developed over the next two years. The legislated changes formalize past practices related to partnerships, and require annual needs assessments, strategic plans, and a state advisory council (SAC). Governor Heineman has identified ECICC as the SAC for Nebraska. Also included in the reauthorization are changes in teacher qualifications and requirements to file local letters of agreement between grantees and school districts with the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE). Eleanor wants to form a small group to help develop a template for local groups to build on. She will provide additional information in her report to the full Council.

2. Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports (PBIS)

Eleanor Kirkland reported that Nebraska will work with CSEFEL (Center for Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning) for training and technical assistance for PBIS. A strategic plan has been updated and will to be posted on the website. The second phase of training for PBIS will take place in fall 2008. Carol Fichter noted that they hope to have specific pieces for ages B-3 and 3-5 with connections to curriculums. The four demonstration sites to work with CSEFEL will look at building capacity, developing a template to use in training across the state (teaching pyramid), training of trainers, and more. The demonstration sites are KidsSquad/Omaha, Cedars/Lincoln, Hastings and Plattsmouth. Carol noted that funding, maintaining, and sustaining always present challenges and will require some buy-in on the community level.

3. **Transportation Task Force**

Eleanor Kirkland reported that the Transportation task force was working to develop preliminary recommendations for transportation of young children. They are looking at all areas including foster care, wards of the state, requirements for providers and conflicting regulations. Eleanor expects that they may ask the GBC to provide input on some of the questions/issues, one which might be whether there should be a Council committee to address transportation issues on an on-going basis.

Action:

Recommendation: that the ECICC provide on-going support to and receive regular communication from the Transportation Task Force. GBC members discussed the pros and cons and reached consensus to bring the recommendation to the full Council.

4. **NDE's Office of Early Childhood and ECTC**

- Carol Fichter announced that following Marcia Corr's retirement from NDE, Carol and Melody Hobson were appointed as co-administrators of NDE's Office of Early Childhood, which now also encompasses the Early Childhood Training Center (ECTC). In their co-administrator roles, they will work with policy and administration, with Carol's major focus continuing to be professional development. Carol said in October they expect to convene a group to look at professional development in early childhood across the state. The preliminary group would not be connected to the ECICC, but she expected there would be regular reports to the Council.
- Birth-to-Three Endowment
Carol provided copies of an article in the current issue of *What's Up*, which identifies programs that received Endowment grants. She noted that these programs will be using the same measurement/assessment tools as other early childhood programs.

5. **Part C-Early Development Network (EDN)**

- Helping Babies from the Bench
Amy Bunnell and Joan Luebbers reported on their work with Judge Johnson, Douglas County, provide all-day seminars to personnel involved in the court system across the state. Helping Babies from the Bench partners with EDN, therapists, psychologists, others involved in court actions on how the court system, CPS (Child Protective Services) system and agencies can collaborate together for children in CAPTA (Child Abuse Protection and Treatment Act) referrals. The program provides infant mental health information related to how trauma affects children's development and looks at local and strategic planning to provide care/services for these children. There was some discussion about how to increase Planning Region Teams' engagement in the process.
- Part C Determinations
NDE received word from OSEP (federal Office of Special Education Programs) that Nebraska had received 100% in their determinations for the Part C Annual Performance Report (APR), which ECICC signs off on each year.
- Results Matter Fidelity Process Update
The Results Matter Fidelity Process is a reliability check that providers do on-line ensuring that observations for early childhood assessments are being conducted properly and consistently. Improvements are continuing and the task force recommends that this be an on-going process. Data from last year is currently being analyzed and decisions will be made on corrections for those who didn't meet the reliability check.
- Part C Family Survey
Joan Luebbers and Amy Bunnell reported that the Co-Leads had met with representatives from Westat to discuss the transition from Westat to NDE to conduct the Part C Family Survey.

Westat provided assistance with information on how to conduct the process. Pam Kasl will coordinate the survey at the state level. Results/analyzes from the last survey soon will be available to Planning Region Teams. The last survey had a 57% response rate, which is one of the best in the nation. Data from the survey shows that families who have services coordination show higher outcomes than families who do not have services coordination. This is significant enough to call to the attention of families when they are trying to make a decision about services coordination. Westat is recommending that a focus group look at districts that do not have high rates of services coordination for other factors that may be affect survey responses. Joan thanked the workers in the field for their help on the local level in getting these results.

- **File Review Process**

The Co-Leads are working on changes to the Part C file review process, which has been very labor intensive, to a more technology-based process. NDE will conduct the Part C reviews similar to the way it is done in Part B using a self-assessment web-based process on a 5-year cycle. Joni Thomas explained that the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) needs to do file reviews on a 3-year cycle to meet reporting requirements for services coordination and Medicaid waivers. DHHS will develop a somewhat separate system to meet their monitoring requirements and look for ways to fit together with the NDE process. The change effort is primarily aimed at linking various processes for monitoring and review so that school districts do not have to be involved in several different systems. The group discussed implications and issues with the proposed changes. Tammy Mittelstaedt expressed concern about the 5-year cycle and school accountability. Joan explained that some districts will be doing their self assessment more often and are actively looking at ways to use this data for immediate strategic planning. Planning Region Teams would continue to be an avenue to bring local concerns to the state level. Mary Phillips noted that many districts do the self assessment continually, but they are only required to report to NDE on a 5-year basis. Other members gave comments and Barb Schliesser assured the group that the Co-Leads would continue to work on refining the process for Part C.

Carey Winkler adjourned the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Next meeting: November 14, 2008, 9:00 a.m. (in conjunction with the regular ECICC meeting)

Handouts:

- ✓ Minutes: Gaps and Barriers Committee, May 2, 2008
- ✓ Article by Becky Veak: "Early Childhood Endowment Grants Awarded," *What's Up*.